

# ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup>

## *Home Heating and Cooling System Checklist*



Money Isn't All You're Saving

Make an educated decision when you choose a contractor to install your heating and cooling system. Follow this consumer checklist from ENERGY STAR.



***Be sure your contractor is licensed, well trained, and experienced.*** Ask to see a valid contractor's license, proof of coverage for workers' compensation, and certificates of insurance coverage for liability and property damage. Inquire about references and membership in contractor associations. Ask for proof that your contractor is certified to handle refrigerant in cooling systems.



***Request a calculation of your savings.*** Heating and cooling equipment comes with two price tags: the cost to buy the equipment and the cost to run it. Your contractor should be able to calculate your utility bill savings and total lifetime costs using ENERGY STAR software or worksheets.



***Request a load calculation.*** Ask your contractor to calculate equipment size using computer software or professional guidelines. This will require taking measurements in your house and asking questions. Don't use a contractor who wants to size your unit solely on the square footage of your house.

- ☐ ***Inspect ducts.*** Ask your contractor to inspect your ducts for leaks, incomplete connections and compatibility with the rest of your system. Evaluate your system's performance by using the ENERGY STAR Specification for Ducts. Ideally, your contractor should use diagnostic equipment and, if necessary, fix leaks using a quality duct sealant. In some cases, proper duct repairs may include actual duct modifications to ensure proper supply and return airflow.
- ☐ ***Consider a house pressurization test.*** Test your house and appliances for "backdrafting," which occurs when the fumes from the combustion process are pulled back into the home, threatening the health and safety of occupants.
- ☐ ***Replace both indoor and outdoor coils.*** If you're replacing an air conditioner or heat pump, be sure to replace both indoor and outdoor coils on a matched system for maximum efficiency and reliability.
- ☐ ***Obtain a written contract.*** Always obtain a written contract or proposal before allowing your contractor to install a new system. Be sure to ask about warranties for labor and parts.
- ☐ ***Weigh the costs.*** Remember that the lowest price may not always be the best price. Carefully evaluate a contractor's proposal to ensure you get the equipment and service that best meets your needs. Paying slightly more now may get you better equipment, service and save you money in the years to come due to lower costs of ownership.
- ☐ ***Install for easy maintenance.*** Make sure the inside coil can be reached for its annual cleaning. The air filter should also be easily removed, cleaned or changed when dirty. Check it monthly during peak season.



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